THE Virgins Complaint for the losse of their Svveet-Hearts,

by these present Wars,

And their owne long solitude, and keeping their

VIRGINITIES

against their wills:

Presented in the names and behalfes of all the Damsels both of Country and City, *January* 29. by sundry Virgins of the City of *London*.

Whereunto is added a mournfull Dittie, written by some of the wittiest wenches among them.

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The Virgins Complaint, for the losse of their SWEET-HEARTS.

SO many and so urgent are the necessities of us poor distressed damsels, comprehended under the severall names of *Maids* and *Virgins*, throughout this Kingdome, that we should be held guilty of that capitall crime against the Prerogative of our Sex, *Silence*, should we not with open mouths and free endeavours of all the best parts about us, turne our owne solicitors, and set forth in its lively colours in this our pittifull complaint, our encreasing miseries. First, then, we are to notifie and remonstrate to all the world, that we are more dammified by these wars then any, but those who have true feeling of our cases, can imagine; we have not only lost in them our friends and brothers, but also are deprived of the benefit which creation made us for, to be a helper to man in his necessities, which it is impossible for us to doe, except we betroth our selves to frosty-bearded *Vsurers*, that are as cold in their constitutions and performance, as they are in their charities; and what good such bungling fumblers, that cannot stand alone without the helpe of crutches, can doe us poore distressed *Maidens*, let any indifferent man that hath all his five senses be judge. What comfort, or consolation can we have from bodies of that age, that are no way acquainted with a tender Virgins qualme and longings. No, no, these cruell and bloody wars could not be contented with them, idle and useless members, old men, for then we would have spared them with all our hearts, our fathers and uncles, and beene glad so to have been rid of them: but these wars (far more ravenous and greedy then

then wee *Maids* are after *Mans* fleſh) could ſatisfie its inſatiate longings with no fleſh, but that pure delicious fleſh of all fleſh, the young and luſty mens fleſh, one little morſell of which well handled, is better, and of more value then all the wars of Chriſtendome, which onely aime at the deſtruction of mankinde; and therefore in juſtice ſhould deſtroy none, but ſuch men, old men, which are meerly beds full of bones, and good for nothing but to converſe with duſt, earth, and aſhes, and not have meddled with the young men, able to have done more good in the Commonwealth then five hundred of the others, as all wee *Maids* will take our corporall oaths on the ſpiritnall booke of our Virginities. And yet theſe men, young men (woe worth the time!) muſt be enticed and commanded, nay, ſometimes preſt to the warres, when wee deſired rather they ſhould have been preſſing our neceſſities; and there they are killed and beaten downe by multitudes, who were able to beget multitudes, might we, *Maids*, *Virgins*, and *Damſells*, of all ſorts and ſizes, from thirteene to thirty (for above that age they are called *Matrons*) have but had our wills: but it hath pleaſed heaven for our offences, to raviſh from us our beſt of comforts, by depriving us of their much loved ſocieties. Hence (which is thy principall cauſe of this our complaint) wee the *Maids*, and *Virgins* in the City, are enforced, ſince all the handſome able young men are departed, to cure the heat of our appetites with the cooling vertue of Oat-meale and clay-wall, the violence of our concupiſcence driving us elſe into that conſumption of the ſweets of *Maiden-heads*, the green-ſickneſſe, which feed upon us more ravenouſly then a Vulture, deflowring and penetrating the precious colour of our complexions changed thereby into a bad and ill-favoured hew, ſuch as is able to affright luſt it ſelfe from attempting us. Hence alſo ariſes, that we are afflicted with hideous and deathfull longings, ſuch as are oftentimes prejudiciall to our wits, which indeed depend rather on the ſatisfaction of our wills and bodies then of our ſoules. Hence it comes to paſſe, that wee the *Damſells* of the City, oftentimes for the ſatisfaction of our neceſſities, and to appeaſe the hunger of our ſtomacks beneath the waſte, ſince the departure of the luſty young Gentlemen, Courtiers, and Cavaliers, and the miſſe of our ableſt Prentices,

tices and handsome journey men, with whom wee had used to walk to *Islington* and *Pimlico*, to eat Cakes, and drinke Christian Ale on Holy-dayes, are inforced to allure with sheeps eyes, winks, and other provocations, the younger Gentlemen of our fathers shops, to ease us of that insupportable burden of our virginities, lest by the long absceence of the other in the wars, which are likely to continue, we should die maids, and so lead Apes in Hell, which certainly would be great pity, that so many handsome maidens should suffer under such pernicious punishments, which our innocence and gentlenesse hath no way deserved, wee having alwayes beene held from the wealthy round Citizens daughter in the gold chaine, to the water-bearers Virgins of most easie and comming natures, as all those young men can beare us witnesse, who have had occasion to make any use of the goodnesse of our dispositions, which never turned suitor away, had hee but a nose on his face; for a man we alwayes held to be a man, though hee had but an nose on his head: and therefore it came so often to passe, that in meer charity, wee of the wealthy have ingendered with spruce Taylors, because wee knew they know how to use their yards: But woe and alas! those nimble fellows, although they say Taylors are no men, are by these villanous warres taken away from us: the warres have clipt divers of their threds, the warres have prest them downe to the earth, never to rise againe, and we are left disconsolate of all succour, or reliefe to our urgent and bodily afflictions; our very Shooe-makers that had used to take the length of our foot, and fit us with their owne last, being in these very warres too taken from us, what helpe then can wee poore afflicted creatures hope for, or entertaine, but that wee must either keepe our maiden-heads till they be mustie, and so not veridible with great portions, or die Martyrs in the flames of carnality and concupiscence, and what a ruine will this bring upon the Common-wealth (as simple as people may imagine us to be) wee can understand.

For first, by copulation and matrimoniall conjunction, the people of the Kingdome are increased, who are to defend it against its enemies, *Turke*, *Pope* and *Spaniards*; and of this copulation and matrimoniall conjunction, are we Virgins the principall cau-

ses,

ses, through the good desires of our hearts, to fulfill the commandement given to our first parents, *increase & multiply*; it is we only that are the patient bearers of the burthen of the flesh, not fearing what man can doe unto us, we that are like goodly fields, which if they were tilled and fructified with the ploughshare of procreation, would bring forth fruit in abundance, but being unbroken up, grow straight-way barren and uselesse, good for nought at all, but to bring forth thistles and weeds, which pollute and defile their naturall fruitfulnesse. Wee, although women, are held the weaker vessells, having strength enough to venture on the tallest man that ever was borne by a woman, nay, and in our tender yeers being as it were tiny girles to speak of, for the good of the Common-welth (of which we hope we are members) and the propagation of people, which, since these young mens departures to these wars, we have had no opportunity to doe as wee would be done by, neither in City, Towne, nor Countrey, the young men of chine and pith, with whom wee the Maids and Virgins of the Countrey used to solace our selves, and recreate our bodies on Shrove-Tuesday and Holidayes at night, in Barnes with the Fidler, and in Summer-season under and upon Hay-cocks, being now in other, and, perhaps, hotter service in the wars; so that a sudden desolation is like to follow: and since wee cannot have our wonted conjunction in a faire way, who are the breeders of the Kingdome, there must needs be a great want of man-kind in all this Realme, they still decreasing, as being slaine, and dying manifold other deaths, and few or none springing up to supply their roomes. And surely this is a lamentable matter, when men shall be so scarce, that women must be confined to their husbands, and glad they can get them too; and when before one woman, (by report) would have served twenty men, one man must be faine to serve twenty women, and yet all they can do not *sufficient* to content us maids, who have before beene blessed with such store and choyce of suitors and servants. Besides, to shed humane blood is against all divine and humane lawes; and barbarous it is for men, especially young handsome men, to run at one another with their naked weapons; nay, it is very unnaturall, that we Virgins should not have liberty to imploy our talents to the best use,

 which

which we can never have as long as this dearth of young men is occasioned by these fatall and unluckie civill wars, which, had they happened when our fathers were Batchellors, and our mothers Maids (as we are now) we had never come into this world to indure this affliction, to have our naturall and just delights and recreations in the heighth of our youths taken from us; for either wee must vitiate our chastity, and defile our honesties with fornications, or perish, which is farre more intollerable in the state of our viginities: it is enough that these warres call away our brothers and kindred from us, they should not be so ravenous as to take away from us young Maids our Sweet-hearts, as if all mankind were ordained to satisfie the pleasure of sutlers wives in the Camp, or to get children on the daughters and Damsells of the townes where they are billeted in garrison. Barrennesse is one of heavens greatest curses, and why should it be inflicted on us in despight of our hearts, to the utter ruine of our bodies and soules, more of the faithfull Virgins of our Nation having falne to wickednesse since the beginning and lamentable continuance of the wars, then in many yeeres before, which we, who are still inforced to remaine Virgins with great griefe of heart remonstrate, and yet can find no men to pity our cases, or put their helping hand to relieve our necessities.

In conclusion, for want of procreation in lawfull matrimoniall wayes, the land will be robbed of inhabitants, the State of servants to execute its offices, Trading, both with men and women, wives as well as maids and virgins, be brought to utter decay; so that there will no children be borne to repleniſh the earth, since there will be no young men left to repleniſh us with the spirit of fruitfulnesse: so by this way the Kingdome will want people, and be subject to all invasions of its enemies.

In tender consideration of all which hideous and afflictive grievances with teares in our eyes, and sighs from our hearts, we the Virgins, Maids and Damsells, as well in and about the City of *London*, and the suburbs thereof, as throughout the whole Kingdome of *England*, from fifteen to fifty, most humbly proffer this our complaint, and in hope that a gentle eare will be given to it, we doe hereby binde our selves in the bonds of our Maidenheads,

under

under the forfeiture of the Recognizance of our virginities, if we may have an ample and sudden redresse of these our oppressions, and that by the cessation of these wars and tumultuous broyles, wee may againe enjoy the comfortable presence and societie of those so lamented young men our *Sweet-hearts*, never more to prostitute our youths to that adulterous furie, the *Green-sickneſſe*, never more to eat clay-wall, mortar, and small-coales, nor to inhaunce the price of oat meale, by our ravening it up to appease the hunger of our concupiscence; never will we be cruell to any suitor that is of qualitie, or delay him with faint and fictious denials to extort Jewels out of him for a kisse, and to make him spend his patrimony in Ribbonds, Gloves, and other gifts; never will we run away with our fathers serving-men, nor have our maiden-heads worne out like thread-bare groats, before wee are given to the lawfull bed by marriage: Finally, wee will not dissemble our intents, but be free & open in all. In regard of all which promised reformations, and upon our faithfull and serious vowes, that wee will be good Girles and please our Fathers, and no way injure or cornute our husbands, when we shall have the happinesse to have them; we do hope a gracious and indulgent eare will be afforded to this our virgin complaint, and that a sudden cessation will be imposed on these fatall and civill wars, and peace restored to us, together with our *Sweet-hearts*: And wee the pure Virgins under fourteen, to the number of five thousand, or thereabouts: of other more mature Maids, and supposed Virgins, to the number of two hundred thousand in the whole Kingdome, shall in all dutie and modestie ever pray, &c.

The mournfull Dittie.

ALL you in pittie
That read this Dittie,
And have perus'd our virgins sad complaint,
Doe your endevours
To cure our fevers,
That renders us so passing wan and faint:
If you be men to heale us body and soule,
Give us some oyle of man to make us whole.

Tis not your glisters,
Purges nor blisters
Can make our sickly bodies whole and sound:
Nosleepie potion,
Nor other notion
Of physick for our sickneſse can be found:
Only one thing which makes us thus condole,
The oyle of man can cure us in the hole.

FINIS.